

CLAIMS

1. A method of generating a process plan comprising:
 - i) storing at least one generic process plan,
 - 5 ii) storing at least one non-generic process element containing a predetermined pattern,
 - iii) searching said at least one generic process plan for the predetermined pattern contained by at least one non-generic process element,
 - iv) on detection of the predetermined pattern, inserting content from said at
10 least one non-generic process element into the generic process plan to generate a process plan, and
 - v) outputting the generated process plan.
2. A method according to claim 1 further comprising the steps of receiving for
15 storage at least one generic process plan and receiving for storage at least one non-generic process element.
3. A method according to either one of the preceding claims wherein each stored
20 generic process plan is indexed in accordance with a goal to be achieved by the plan and the method further comprises:
 - vi) receiving a goal input, and
 - vii) selecting a generic process plan for searching, said selection being in accordance with the received goal input.
- 25 4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein at least one non-generic process element comprises resource information, identifying one or more resources to support a process step in a generated process plan.
5. A method according to claim 4 wherein each stored non-generic process element
30 comprising resource information is indexed in accordance with one or more relevant resources.
6. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein at least one inserted
35 process element comprises data.

7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein at least one non-generic process element comprises context specific method steps or data and is indexed for storage according to the relevant context.
- 5 8. A method according to claim 7 wherein the context for at least one non-generic process element is service type.
9. A method according to either one of claims 7 or 8 wherein the context for at least one non-generic process element is customer type.
- 10 10. A method according to any one of the preceding claims which comprises selecting an item of content from two or more alternative items of content, said two or more alternative items of content being identified from said at least one non-generic process element, and inserting the selected content into the generic process plan in generating
- 15 a process plan.
11. A method according to claim 10 wherein the selection is domain specific.
12. Apparatus for use in generating a process plan, the apparatus comprising:
- 20 i) a generic process plan store
- ii) a non-generic process element store
- iii) means for searching generic process plans for at least one predetermined pattern contained in a non-generic process element,
- iv) means for inserting content from said at least one non-generic process element
- 25 into a generic process plan on detection of the predetermined pattern so as to generate a process plan, and
- v) an output for generated process plans.
13. Apparatus for use in generating a process plan, the apparatus comprising:
- 30 i) a generic process plan store
- ii) a non-generic process element store
- iii) search means for searching generic process plans for at least one predetermined pattern contained in a non-generic process element,
- iv) selection means for selecting at least one item of content from a set of two or more
- 35 alternative items of content,

v) insertion means for inserting the selected item(s) of content on detection of the predetermined pattern so as to progress towards generating, or generate, a process plan, and

vi) an output for generated process plans

5 wherein the set of two or more alternative items of content is identified by said at least one non-generic process element.

14. Apparatus according to claim 13 wherein said selection means is adapted to select the at least one item of content with respect to a domain of operation for a generated
10 process plan.

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